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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (UNAVEM III)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 of Security Council resolution 1045 (1996) of 8 February 1996, in which the Council, inter alia, requested me to report by 7 March 1996 on the progress made by the Government of Angola and the União Nacional para a Indepêndencia Total de Angola (UNITA) towards meeting the goals and timetable agreed between them, and to keep the Council fully informed of developments on the ground. The report covers events since my last report dated 31 January 1996 (S/1996/75).

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. During the period under review, a number of foreign dignitaries visited Angola and underscored their strong concern at the slow progress in the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol (see S/1994/1441, annex). As a result of these contacts, as well as the efforts of my Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, and the representatives of the three observer States (Portugal, the Russian Federation and the United States of America), there has been some movement towards meeting the goals established in the timetable agreed upon by the Government and UNITA in January 1996.

3. Among the positive developments during the past month are a decrease in the number of cease-fire violations; a further reduction in hostile propaganda; the release of additional prisoners registered with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (while the Government has freed all 353 such prisoners held by it, UNITA has so far released 139); the disengagement of government forces from some forward positions; and continued quartering of the rapid reaction police in 3 out of the 10 planned quartering areas. However, the implementation of many other elements is still behind schedule, particularly the crucial quartering of UNITA troops. Delays in this process have affected the implementation of other key provisions of the Lusaka Protocol, including the extension of State administration throughout the country.

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4. The Joint Commission, the principal body charged with monitoring the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, has continued to hold regular meetings under the chairmanship of my Special Representative. The follow-up mechanism set up recently by the Commission to monitor the implementation process at the head-of-delegation level has been operating on a daily basis and has proved to be an effective instrument in persuading the parties to honour their commitments. My Special Representative and the three observer States presented to the Government and UNITA a revised timetable for the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol. Following a meeting at Bailundo on 19 February 1996 between UNITA leader Mr. Jonas Savimbi and a high-level government delegation, the Joint Commission approved the timetable on 28 February 1996. The present document describes in detail various tasks the two parties and the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) will have to implement during the month of March, and envisages substantial acceleration of the entire peace process.

5. The fourth meeting between President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi took place on 1 March 1996 at Libreville, Gabon. With regard to military issues, Mr. Savimbi promised to complete the quartering of UNITA troops by June 1996 and both sides agreed to start the process of selection of UNITA troops for incorporation into the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) and to complete the formation of the unified armed forces, also by June. They also agreed to form by June or July the Government of Unity and National Reconciliation in which Mr. Savimbi would be a Vice-President. On his part, Mr. Savimbi submitted to President dos Santos a list of officials proposed for the various posts reserved for UNITA in the Government and the administration. It was agreed that the mandate of the current National Assembly would be extended following adequate consultations and that President dos Santos would soon declare an amnesty for offences resulting from the Angolan conflict.

6. There has been no progress towards the establishment of an independent United Nations radio, on which the Security Council has pronounced itself on several occasions. I urge the Government of Angola to resolve this important issue without further delay.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

A. Observance of the cease-fire

7. During the reporting period, the military situation remained generally calm, except for a few skirmishes, primarily in the provinces of Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul, Benguela and Huila. In the Lundas, most of the reported violations were related to disputes over control of diamond-producing areas; in the Southern Region, many of them resulted from cattle rustling by elements of both the Government and UNITA forces. The number of cease-fire violations dropped considerably towards the end of February. The Armed Conflict Prevention Group, which comprises high-ranking military representatives of the two parties and UNAVEM III, has played an effective role in the investigation and control of cease-fire violations. UNAVEM III has also been encouraging meetings between FAA and UNITA field commanders to build confidence at the local level.

8. The restrictions of movement imposed by UNITA on the personnel of UNAVEM III and other international organizations have been lifted. However, on 6 February, a Bangladeshi engineering team was ambushed, fortunately without casualties, by unidentified individuals in Kwando Kubango Province, and on 18 February, a UNAVEM III staff member and civilian personnel of MECHEM, a South African demining company under contract to the United Nations, were briefly detained by UNITA.

B. Completion of the formation of the Angolan Armed Forces

9. The Government and UNITA continued intensive talks on this issue, which is expected to be resolved by June 1996. Further delays in resolving this problem may have an adverse effect on the quartering process, since many UNITA troops, particularly their officers, are uncertain about their future. In the meantime, the Government has indicated to UNAVEM III that it is planning to begin the integration of UNITA personnel into FAA once their number in the quartering areas reached 20,000 troops.

C. Quartering process

10. The quartering of UNITA troops is essential to successful implementation of the Lusaka Protocol and it is of the greatest importance that it be carried out in good faith and be completed expeditiously. After the adoption of Security Council resolution 1045 (1996), the pace of quartering in the first four assembly areas accelerated, but since the last week of February it has slowed dramatically. As of 1 March, 16,699 UNITA troops had been registered and 13,728 weapons had been surrendered to the United Nations. In the meantime, UNAVEM III has completed the construction of four additional quartering areas capable of accommodating approximately 20,000 soldiers.

11. Despite extensive preparations by UNAVEM III, the rapid influx of thousands of troops to the first four areas created some problems with food supplies, medical assistance and transport. However, the situation in the camps is currently calm and, in cooperation with UNITA commanders, the United Nations has been addressing these logistic issues. But the quartering process continues to be a major logistical challenge for UNAVEM III, with many unexpected difficulties. During the next stage, for example, UNITA will need assistance with transport for its personnel and equipment from their present positions to the quartering areas; this will require additional air and vehicular support from UNAVEM III.

12. Other aspects of the process continue to cause serious concern. Eighty-one individuals brought to the Vila Nova quartering area subsequently left and turned themselves over to the Angolan National Police, claiming that they had been forcibly recruited for quartering. Reports from UNAVEM III teams in Huambo Province confirm that this practice has indeed taken place in some areas. In Kimbele (Northern Region), UNAVEM III discovered a group of juveniles under detention in a UNITA prison; on investigation, it turned out that a local commander had received orders from his superiors to "recruit" young individuals for quartering. UNAVEM III has also observed that some UNITA troops arriving in

quartering areas are below or above the usual age for military service. Another concern of the Mission is that 30 to 40 per cent of the personal weapons collected are in very poor condition or not serviceable. UNAVEM III is actively pursuing these matters, which have a direct bearing on the credibility of the whole process.

13. The staff of the United Nations, its agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the quartering areas continue to provide humanitarian assistance, including medical services, to the family members of soldiers who are quartered nearby, as well as to other vulnerable groups in the neighbourhood. Representatives of United Nations agencies and international NGOs have also been deployed to the four additional quartering areas recently completed.

14. With regard to the withdrawal of the FAA troops to the nearest barracks, which is another important element of the Lusaka agreements, the Government has indicated that it will remove its forces from all the areas where the quartering of UNITA troops has been completed.

D. Demining and road rehabilitation

15. With the improvement of the military situation throughout the country, the United Nations has been able to step up its road rehabilitation and demining activities. In close cooperation with the Central Mine Action Office of the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit and the Angolan Institute for the Removal of Explosive Devices, UNAVEM III has been training over 130 Angolan demining specialists. The graduates of these courses will be regrouped into demining brigades, which will be employed by the Angolan Institute for the Removal of Explosive Devices under the supervision of UNAVEM III. Specialized international NGOs also continue to train Angolan personnel as mine awareness instructors, deminers and supervisors to support road rehabilitation programmes and other humanitarian activities - mainly in the provinces of Bié, Benguela, Huambo, Malange and Kwando Kubango.

16. At the same time, active mine verification is being undertaken by NGOs and UNAVEM III around quartering areas, bridges and some access roads. MECHEM has now verified 682 kilometres of roads and cleared 647 kilometres of roads. As of 1 March, UNAVEM III engineer units had installed and/or reconstructed 10 bridges in various parts of Angola.

E. UNAVEM III strength and deployment

17. The strength of UNAVEM III military and police personnel was 6,539 as of 1 March. With the establishment of two mobile verification teams to monitor the quartering of UNITA troops and the withdrawal of FAA to barracks, UNAVEM III now has a total of 56 observer teams, 33 of which include civilian police observers. The induction of two companies from Zambia and Ukraine of 200 men each, as well as additional logistic elements from Portugal, is expected in March as planned.

IV. POLICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS

18. The activities of the civilian police component (CIVPOL) of UNAVEM III continued to focus on monitoring the neutrality of the Angolan National Police, the general law and order situation, the free circulation of people and the provision of assistance to the Mission's Human Rights Unit. CIVPOL also verified and monitored the quartering of the rapid reaction police, which has so far been conducted in the cities of Luanda, Huambo and Uige. As of 1 March, 2,295 rapid reaction police out of a declared total of 2,444 had been quartered. The Government has indicated its readiness to start barracking the rapid reaction police in several other places, depending on progress in the quartering of UNITA troops. It has also agreed to return to Luanda 220 rapid reaction police recently deployed to Lunda Norte Province. However, it has indicated that the quartering of the rapid reaction police elements stationed in Cabinda will be delayed, since they are providing security for major oil installations there. Since accommodation in many parts of the country is scarce, it will be important to assist the rapid reaction police with the provision of temporary shelter. As an interim measure, I intend to provide them with tents from the United Nations logistic base at Brindisi.

19. The civilian police component has also closely monitored the activities of the Angolan National Police in providing security to UNITA leaders residing in Luanda. A comprehensive security plan still needs to be worked out by the two parties as a matter of priority. It is imperative that UNITA notify the Government without further delay of the personnel it wishes to designate for training as bodyguards and provide a list of its members who will require special security protection.

20. The Government has indicated that, after the completion of the demobilization of UNITA troops, it will begin the disarmament of the civilian population, which is another essential element of the Lusaka Protocol. UNAVEM III has provided the Government with comprehensive proposals in this regard. In view of the deterioration of law and order throughout the country, I urge the Government to initiate the disarmament process as soon as possible.

21. UNAVEM III teamsites continue to report numerous violations of basic human rights in many parts of Angola. United Nations human rights personnel and CIVPOL monitor the situation and investigate complaints presented by the Government and UNITA, as well as by private individuals. UNAVEM III has also finalized a plan of action, for which a special voluntary trust fund will be established, aimed at promoting human rights education. In implementation of this plan, UNAVEM III organized on 27 February a seminar for law enforcement officers in Benguela Province. In the meantime, the European Union has agreed to provide support to a UNAVEM III project, which will be prepared in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights of the United Nations Secretariat, to train Angolan nationals involved in human rights education.

V. HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

22. After a reduction of tension, humanitarian assistance activities, including road convoys and relief flights, returned to normal in January and February. The World Food Programme (WFP) was able to transport over 80 per cent of relief items overland. For the first time, a humanitarian convoy travelled from Huambo to Andulo via Mungo in Bié Province. The opening of this route will facilitate access to the nearby quartering area and to needy populations in the neighbourhood. Thanks to the joint efforts of UNAVEM III, United Nations agencies and NGOs, it is also expected that the Malange-Saurimo-Luena road will be opened soon, allowing relief organizations to reach needy populations in the eastern part of Angola.

23. However, access to many municipalities is still restricted, as a result of bad road conditions, mine pollution and lack of adequate security. In eastern and central Angola, isolated security incidents have led to the temporary suspension of relief activities. In response to reports of food shortages in northern Angola, various relief agencies have started humanitarian operations in that region. Over the past year, the number of NGOs providing health assistance in Uige Province has increased from 2 to 10, but numerous checkpoints maintained by both parties are still hindering relief operations in the area.

24. The United Nations continues to encourage active participation by local officials in various humanitarian activities and the free circulation of people and goods. On 13 February, members of the National Humanitarian Coordination Group, led by the Minister for Social Assistance, attended a meeting of the provincial coordination group in the city of Uige, after which the Minister went to the UNITA-controlled town of Negage to discuss with the Vice-President of UNITA specific measures to foster national reconciliation and free movement of the population. In Huila Province, efforts by United Nations agencies, NGOs and UNAVEM III to promote working relations between government and UNITA officials led to a first meeting between provincial authorities and local UNITA officials. As a result, joint assessment missions are now being sent to vulnerable areas of this province, to be followed by convoys delivering relief supplies.

25. Although nutritional conditions have generally improved, relief agencies continue to identify pockets of malnutrition in the recently accessed areas of Huila, Kwanza Norte and Uige Provinces. Wherever feasible, government and UNITA officials are associated with emergency interventions to address such problems.

26. In the agricultural sector, the initial projections of a good harvest, which were made after the distribution of seeds and tools last November, have proved wrong. Insufficient rainfall portends a severe loss of harvest in various areas, mainly along the coast and in Huambo Province. Humanitarian agencies have recommended the continuation of emergency food distribution in the affected areas.

27. The United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit, in close collaboration with United Nations agencies and NGOs, is preparing the final draft of the 1996 updated appeal for Angola. This appeal reflects the need for resources for emergency assistance, for demining and for the quartering, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants during 1996.

VI. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

28. On 9 February 1996, the Government approved two projects, which were prepared with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to support the demobilization process. One will provide support to demobilized (including disabled and underage) soldiers, their families and communities, through technical assistance to the Angolan Institute for the Socio-Professional Reintegration of Ex-Military Personnel, as well as the establishment of Counselling and Referral Services for ex-combatants. Another project, which was formulated with technical assistance from the International Labour Organization (ILO), will provide vocational and on-the-job training for demobilized personnel.

29. Since the round-table conference, held at Brussels on 25 and 26 September 1995, the Government, with support from UNDP, has designed a coordination mechanism aimed at the effective implementation of the Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation Programme. According to this plan, donors will provide technical and capacity building support to the Ministry of Planning and to Provincial Planning Offices. In the meantime, nine provinces have been identified for quick establishment of technical units in charge of implementing the programme. In anticipation of its start, a meeting at Luanda between provincial governors and the donor community is planned to be convened shortly. Also, the Government has requested UNDP to begin a review of the existing projects in the area of economic management and to formulate an integrated programme that would include all external assistance programmes. In pursuance of that initiative, a special UNDP mission arrived in Angola on 20 February. This should help to create the conditions for the adoption of the stabilization programme with International Monetary Fund (IMF) support. It is hoped that the exercise will result in the preparation of an economic management capacity-building programme by June 1996.

VII. OBSERVATIONS

30. By extending the mandate of UNAVEM III for three months, the Security Council clearly signalled that, while it was prepared to continue to support the peace process in Angola, the Government and UNITA must demonstrate their commitment to implement the Lusaka Protocol without further delay.

31. Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1045 (1996), the parties have taken some steps in the right direction. Of particular importance was the long-awaited fourth meeting that took place at Libreville on 1 March between President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi. These high-level meetings can play an important role in the promotion of national reconciliation and encourage the steady advance of the peace process. They also set an example for a continuous dialogue at all levels inside the country.

32. While the Government should be commended for the implementation of several of its commitments, UNITA's quartering of more than 16,000 troops was, despite its significant shortcomings, a step forward. But the mandate given to UNAVEM III by the Security Council in its resolution 976 (1995) has already passed its mid-point. Time is running short if the parties are to complete the

numerous outstanding tasks foreseen in the Lusaka Protocol. In recent days, the quartering of UNITA troops has slowed dramatically. Instances of forced recruitment and the substandard quality and quantity of weapons, equipment and ammunition brought to the quartering areas are bound to raise doubts about the good faith of UNITA in its approach to this process. UNITA can dispel these doubts only by completing the quartering in an expeditious and orderly manner in accordance with the new timetable. Failure to do so would test the patience and goodwill of the international community. Equally important are a transparent withdrawal of FAA to barracks and the completion of the quartering of the rapid reaction police.

33. At the same time, rapid conclusion of the talks on all outstanding military matters is critical for the advancement of the peace process. The Government must intensify practical preparations for the integration of UNITA personnel into FAA and administrative and governmental structures. Confidence between the parties must be reinforced by the release of all prisoners held by UNITA, unrestricted circulation of people throughout Angola, the launching of a country-wide campaign to disarm civilians, the transformation of UNITA into a political party and the effective implementation of other aspects of the Lusaka Protocol.

34. The humanitarian crisis in Angola is far from over and, as I have stressed in previous reports, there is still need for massive emergency assistance. I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate my appreciation to the donor community for its generous contributions to programmes that alleviate the suffering of the Angolan people. At the same time, the task of socio-economic rehabilitation and reconstruction is yet to begin. Moreover, the success of all these efforts depends on the establishment of genuine peace and national reconciliation, a goal that can only be achieved through the full commitment of the Government and UNITA to honour their obligations under the Lusaka Protocol.

Annex

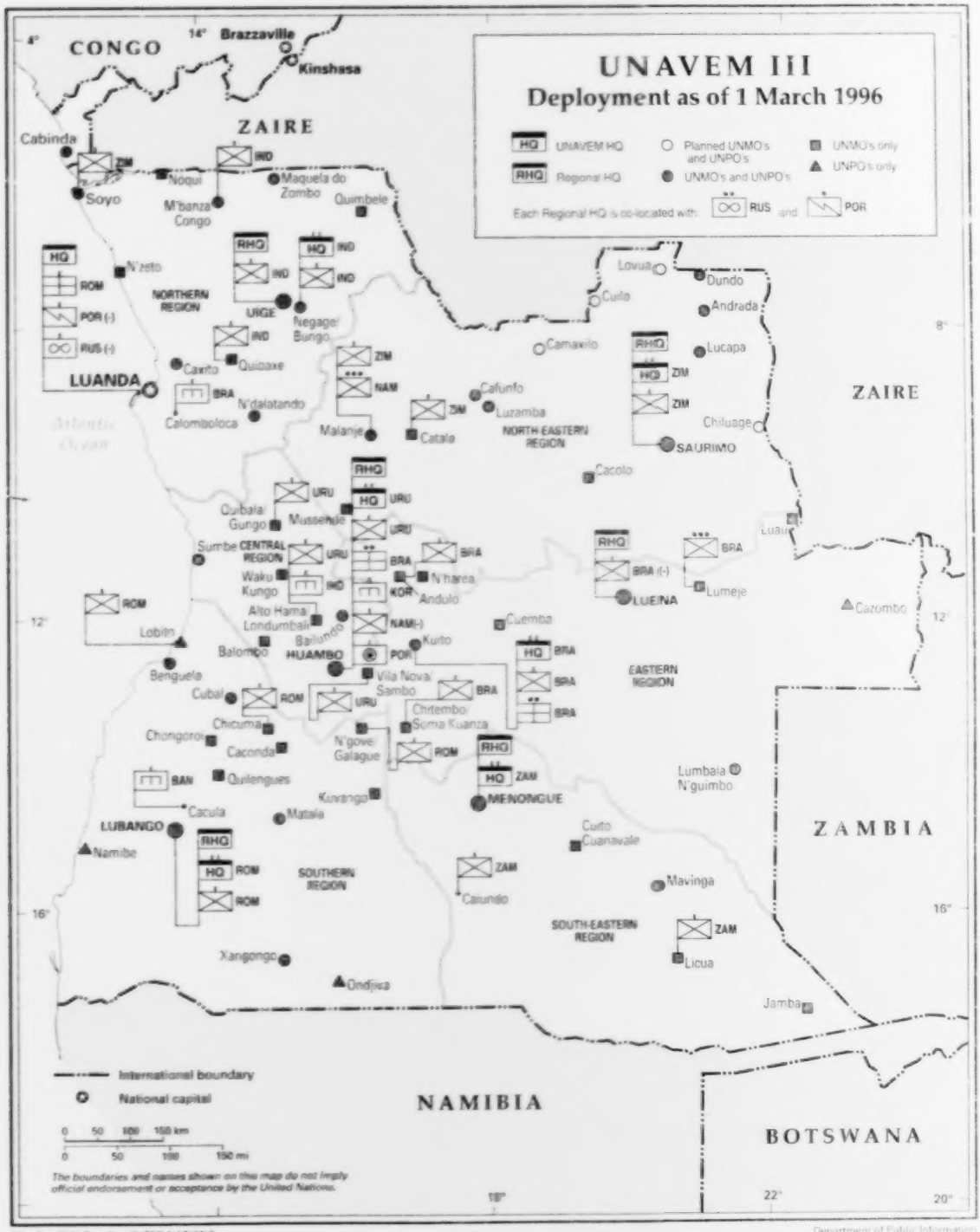
UNAVEM III - Military and civilian police personnel
(as of 1 March 1996)

Country	Military observers	Civilian police officers	Staff officers	Troops	Total
Algeria	8	--	--	--	8
Bangladesh	10	21	21	200	252
Brazil	20	9	38	867	934 a/
Bulgaria	9	15	--	--	24
Congo	8	--	--	--	8
Egypt	10	15	--	--	25
Fiji	--	10	--	--	10
France	8	--	12 b/	--	20
Guinea-Bissau	20	--	--	--	20
Hungary	10	8	--	--	18
India	20	13	49	1 014	1 096
Italy	--	--	4 b/	--	4
Jordan	20	21	--	--	41
Kenya	10	--	--	--	10
Malaysia	20	20	--	--	40
Mali	10	15	--	--	25
Namibia	--	--	--	200	200
Netherlands	16	8	8 b/	--	32
New Zealand	6	--	9 b/	--	15
Nigeria	21	20	--	--	41
Norway	5	--	--	--	5
Pakistan	5	--	7 b/	--	12
Poland	5	--	--	--	5
Portugal	9	11	20	241	281
Republic of South Korea	--	--	6	198	204
Romania	--	--	26	859	885

Country	Military observers	Civilian police officers	Staff officers	Troops	Total
Russian Federation	13	--	--	160	173
Senegal	10	--	--	--	10
Slovakia	5	--	--	--	5
Sweden	20	10	--	--	30
Ukraine	5	--	--	9	14
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	--	--	2	--	2
United Republic of Tanzania	--	3	--	--	3
Uruguay	10	12	42	800	864
Zambia	19	15	12	295	341
Zimbabwe	23	22	45	800	890
Total	355	248	301	5 643	6 547

a/ The contingent is undergoing a major rotation.

b/ Military specialists in the UNAVEM III demining school.



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March 1996

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